



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs

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Lt. Governor Karyn E. Polito
Secretary Matthew A. Beaton

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**Department of Conservation and Recreation to
Revitalize Massasoit State Park**
Public Will Receive Increased Access to Taunton Facility

TAUNTON- Tuesday, May 19, 2015- The Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) today announced that the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) is undertaking steps to increase public accessibility at Massasoit State Park through renovation projects and the assignment of seasonal staff. Enhanced accessibility at the 1,500 acre park is expected to begin on July 1, 2015.

“The Baker-Polito Administration is strongly committed to providing Massachusetts’ residents with access to safe, clean, open spaces, including the Department of Conservation and Recreation’s 449,000 acres of forests, beaches, campgrounds and mountains,” **said Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito**. “Massasoit State Park is an invaluable resource for the residents of Taunton and the surrounding communities, and I look forward to witnessing the benefits of increased access to this beautiful state park.”

“Increasing access for all citizens to enjoy the natural beauty and splendor of the Commonwealth is a goal of the Baker-Polito Administration,” said **EEA Secretary Matthew Beaton**. “Through the efforts of EEA and DCR, I am proud we will be able to offer Massachusetts residents more opportunities for outdoor recreation and a better, safer experience at Massasoit State Park.”

The new revitalization initiatives include:

- The assignment of a full time seasonal park supervisor;
- The hiring of two seasonal staff members;
- The renovation of the park’s contact station and a bathroom facility;
- The placement of new signage throughout the park; and
- The continued assessment of park trails.

“The rejuvenation of the Massasoit State Park has been a priority of the Department of Conservation and Recreation for years, and I am thrilled that the public will once again be able to have more access this wonderful park,” **said DCR Commissioner Carol Sanchez**. “Through the help and support of the Baker-Polito Administration, Taunton’s legislative delegation, the Friends of Massasoit State Park, and supporters everywhere, the increased accessibility of the park has become a reality.”

Another major component of the capital improvement plan includes electrical upgrades. About seven years ago lightning struck the state park, disabling the facility's power lines. Electrical work for Phase One is expected to begin in June.

"I am thrilled that the main road gate will be open as of July 1, 2015 and that the public will have access to more of the park," **said State Representative Keiko Orrall**. "This has been one of my top priorities since taking office and I am grateful for Secretary Beaton's leadership and the support of Commissioner Sanchez and the Baker-Polito Administration. With the help of DCR's Karl Pastore, Friends of Massasoit coordinator Chuck Kowalker, Senator Pacheco's office, and the Taunton Municipal Lighting Plant, we are restoring one of the area's most beautiful assets. It has been a team effort to get this far and we look forward to the complete renewal of Massasoit State Park."

"I am thrilled Southeastern Massachusetts residents will again have some access to the beauty and recreational opportunities available at Massasoit State Park," **said Senate President Pro Tempore Marc R. Pacheco**. "I'm pleased that this investment has come to fruition after working with my colleagues Representative Keiko Orrall and Speaker Pro Tempore Patricia Haddad. This revitalization plan is a great first step towards what I hope will be a long-term solution for Massasoit State Park; we have a long way to go to make this park the asset it once was, but I look forward to the activity this plan will immediately return to the area."

By assigning a full-time seasonal park supervisor located within Massasoit State Park, the park will become a cleaner, safer place where visitors will have the opportunity to enjoy many nature-based activities, including hiking, mountain biking, walking, fishing, interpretive programs, non-motorized boating, cross-country skiing and hunting (with restrictions).

This investment will help the Department of Conservation and Recreation to provide a greater level of accessibility to Massasoit State Park on a more permanent basis going forward.

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